

**Interbasin Compact Committee Basin Roundtables  
Rio Grande Inter Basin Roundtable**

**M I N U T E S**

**February 10, 2009  
Alamosa City Recreation Center**

**Attending:** Lewis H. Entz, Ray Wright, Paul T. Burns, Ed Nielsen, Travis Smith, Allen Brown, Jay Yeager, Dale Pizel, Lawrence D. Gallegos, Maurice Gibson, Greg Higel, Gary Hausler, Nicole Langley, Mike Willett, Mike Gibson, Charles Spielman, Rio de la Vista, Gerry McDaniel, Cindy Medina, Judy Lopez, Bob Kirkham, Zeke Ward, Charlotte Bobicki, Paul Robertson, Bruce E. Rittenhouse, Craig Cotton, Pete Berkman, Erin Minks, Jay Winner, Cheryl Santi, Ron Brink, Ruth Heidi.

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**1. Introductions** – Mike Gibson, Chair asked individuals to introduce themselves and their affiliation. Charlie Stillings' father is in the hospital. JB Alexander was not able to make it due to bad weather. Both asked to be excused.

**2. Approval of Minutes from December 9, 2008** -- Cindy Medina moved, Greg Higel seconded. Unanimous approval

**3. Membership Recruitment** – Mike G. reviewed the RT Membership positions open and said letters had gone out to Conejos County Municipalities (Town of LaJara), Trinchera Water Conservancy District, Costilla Water Conservancy District, Costilla County Municipalities (Town of Blanca), Rio Grande County Municipalities (Town of Del Norte), Saguache County Municipalities (Town of Moffat). It was suggested that Bill Yohey might be available as a representative for Conejos County municipalities.

**4. Election of Officers** – Mike Gibson is currently Chairman and Doug Striver is Vice Chair. Mike explained that in the future the Vice Chair and the Secretary might have more duties assigned than those positions have at present.

- Mike Gibson was nominated to continue serving as Chairman by several members at the same time. Motion seconded by Ray Wright. Travis commented, "You've done a great job, Mike. That's part of the reason the Roundtable has done so well." Unanimous approval.

- Ray Wright nominated Doug Shriver as Vice Chair, seconded by Cindy Medina. Unanimous approval.
- Ray Wright nominated Rio de la Vista as Secretary, seconded by Lawrence Gallegos. Unanimous approval.

**5. Location of Posting of Legal Notices / Office** – Travis moved it remain the same, 415 San Juan Avenue in Alamosa. Lawrence Gallegos seconded. Unanimous approval.

**6. IBCC – Education Survey, Judy Lopez** -- Passed out a survey created by members of the Public Education, Participation, and Outreach (PEPO) Workgroup of the IBCC. The purpose is to assess our Roundtable's internal and external educational needs and to help Members fulfill their role on the Roundtable. Internal and external needs are being assessed for each Roundtable to better understand their water education needs. Members urged to complete the survey. Judy will contact members who are not present. All voting members are especially urged to complete the survey. If there are any questions, please direct them to Judy.

Mike Gibson commented that the RT tries to always include some educational element and that today there will be two educational items on the agenda.

**7. Division of Water Resources – Rio Grande Basin Roundtable Report – Craig W. Cotton, Acting Division Engineer, Division III**

- Discussed the compact deliveries on the Rio Grande and Conejos systems. Colorado is looking at an over delivery of approx. 9,300 acre feet on the Rio Grande and 800 acre feet on the Conejos.
- The basinwide snowpack is at 123% of normal. The Rio Grande Basin currently has the highest snowpack in the state (barely)
- The NRCS February 1 forecast is calling for an April-September flow on the Rio Grande of 585,000 Acre-feet, 110% of normal. The forecast for the Conejos System is for an April-September flow of 340,000 acre-feet, approximately 118% of normal.
- The Rio Grande Compact Commission meeting will be held this year in El Paso, Texas, on March 31. For information or questions regarding the Compact Commission meeting, call Tammy Beeman at 915-834-7075.

**8. Request for WSRA Funds: San Antonio River: El Codo Ditch Diversion Rehabilitation – El Codo Ditch Company.** Lawrence Gallegos, ditch company President, made the presentation, assisted by coordinator and grant writer Nicole Langley.

- **Discussion** - Charlie asked about how many acre-feet are adjudicated to be diverted. Lawrence: 77 cfs altogether. Mike explained they can't divert at low flow until they get the equipment in there, often losing about 20-25 acre feet per day for as long as 30 days, depending on the situation. Lawrence added that at high flow, water goes out into the old arroyo and never gets to the Los Sauces gauge, staying out there like a lake when it should be going down to meet the Rio Grande Compact.
- **Comment** – Ray commented that he had a chance to review the proposal with the applicants and that he found it well thought out. Given the difficulty of getting heavy equipment out to the location and the constant need for maintenance and streambank stabilization efforts, “This is the bargain of the year.”
- **Vote** – Ray Wright moved that the application be accepted by the Rio Grande Basin Roundtable. Cindy Medina Seconded. Unanimous approval.

**NOTE re CWCB by Travis:** Make sure the standard budget is not changed. CWCB Controllers Office is having trouble with very detailed budgets, especially with the current budget crisis. Controller is scrutinizing everything – CWCB is trying to simplify. All contracts are being delayed. Mike G. told members that even the Santa Maria Reservoir's proposal, which was approved in September, still does not have a contract. Ray asked if the Antonio River El Codo Ditch Diversion Rehabilitation might be considered a work order, since it is only for \$65,000 of Basin funds and given that the project is urgently needed. This seemed a possibility.

**9. Presentation – *The Super Ditch* – Jay Winner, Executive Director, Lower Arkansas River Water Conservancy District.** Since 1960, the Arkansas Valley has lost 60,000 acres of irrigated agriculture land. The goal of the Super Ditch, a water-marketing corporation formed last year, is to make sure the same thing does not happen in the next 50 years, said Jay Winner, general manager of the Lower Arkansas Valley Water Conservancy District, which shepherded Super Ditch into existence. “The theory is you give up a little to get a lot,” Winner told the Roundtable. The Statewide Water Supply Initiative projected that another 60,000 acres in the Arkansas Valley could be lost as the thirst of cities dries up more farms. The Lower Ark District has worked with farmers to find an alternative for the past few years. Citing the success of the High Line Canal in its 2004-05 leases to Aurora, Winner said temporary leases of water accompanied by land fallowing provide a “new crop” to farmers with certainty of supply to cities or other users who may need the water. The goal of the Super Ditch program is also to protect the interests of rural communities heavily dependent on agriculture. (See copy of Pueblo Chieftain Article, 2/3/09 – “Ag water transfer solutions begin to surface” - handout).

**10. Presentation – *Water Importation from the Mississippi River* – Gary Hausler, Western States Water Resources, LLC.** The proposal is to create a “Central Plains Compact” to build a pipeline from the Mississippi River in the Hickman KY area to pump an initial 1,000,000 AF per year of water to Colorado, relieving the chronic shortage of water throughout the Southwest. The pipeline would generally follow the divide between the South Platte and Arkansas River drainages with the western terminus between Denver and Colorado Springs on the Eastern Slope of the Continental Divide. Water diverted would amount to less than ½ of 1% of average annual flows in the Mississippi. **Comments:** Charlie – should talk to the railroads; think it is a grand idea. Water to E. Slope would alleviate transmountain diversions out of the Valley. For more information, call Gary Hausler at 970-209-9515. (Handout available)

**11. Topics for Next Meeting** – Membership renewals. Eric Hecox will led a discussion on the “Needs Assessment “, required for CWCB using as a starting point the/ SWSI 2005 results. Potential new needs include alternative energy needs.

**12. Other Business** – A brief discussion regarding the CDWR’s new **Advisory** Committee on Rules & Regulations for wells. CDWR were hoping to have it up and running before January, then the State’s budget crisis. Mike Sullivan and Dick Wolf have not had time to make the nominations. The Division has 100 nominations for that committee. Trying to narrow down to 50 people, this is still a large group. Hoping to have the first meeting in next 2-3 weeks. No news from the Judge Kuenhold on the Sub-District Court Case.

Mike G. asked Jay Winner for information on studies done – addressing agricultural transfers and impacts on communities

#### **NEXT MEETING**

**March 10, 2009 @ 2:00 – 5:00 P.M.**

**STUDENT CENTER  
ADAMS STATE COLLEGE  
FIRST STREET, ALAMOSA**